

# NEWS RELEASE

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UTAH ATTORNEY GENERAL  
**MARK SHURTLEFF**

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## **DOCTOR'S ORDERS**

### **M.D. PAYS \$81,000 FOR CHARGING PATIENTS FOR FREE VACCINES**

A Cedar City doctor paid \$81,354 for charging patients for vaccines that were supposed to be offered free to needy children. Dr. Kourosh Ghaffari and Valley View Pediatrics paid the money as part of a settlement with the Utah Attorney General's Office, U.S. Attorney's Office and the Utah Department of Health.

"The money belongs to taxpayers and the vaccines are only supposed to go to children from families who cannot afford to pay. This settlement puts the program back in order," says Attorney General Mark Shurtleff.

The money will go back into the Vaccines for Children program—a federally-funded program administered by the Utah Department of Health.

"This is just another example of how taxpayers are protected when everyone works together to stop fraud," says Paul M. Warner, U.S. Attorney for the District of Utah.

From 1995 to 2000, Valley View Pediatrics and Dr. Ghaffari allegedly charged private insurance companies for the free vaccine. The settlement does not require the doctor or the clinic to admit any wrongdoing.

"Medical providers need to understand that it is improper to make money from something they are supposed to go to others for free," says Wade Farraway, director of the Medicaid Fraud Unit at the Utah Attorney General's Office.

In June, Community Health Care Centers agreed to pay \$267,323 to settle allegations that the health care provider was billing insurance companies for the free vaccines.

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